

WHAT'S *New*

in the Metropolitan Police Department



*A weekly update for residents, visitors,
and workers in the District of Columbia*

Friday, September 24, 2004

MPDC REACHES MILESTONE OF 3,800 SWORN MEMBERS

With the hiring of approximately 20 officers this past week, the MPDC has reached its goal of having 3,800 sworn members on the force—a milestone that will further support neighborhood patrol and community policing efforts. In the Department's current fiscal year 2004 budget, Mayor Williams and the DC Council provided the MPDC with the necessary funds to increase its sworn strength from approximately 3,600 to its authorized level of 3,800 by the end of the fiscal year, which is September 30. The MPDC met that goal 10 days ahead of time, having hired more than 320 officers over the past year. Chief Ramsey pointed out that close to 200 of the 3,800 officers are still in the Academy, so the full impact of having 3,800 officers on the street will not be realized for several months. However, by reaching its authorized level, the Department can now focus its hiring and retention efforts on keeping up with attrition. Reaching 3,800 officers is critical to the Department's full implementation of the Police Service Area (PSA) restructuring plan that was announced earlier this year. Additional officers are being assigned to the PSAs, allowing for enhanced patrols and new opportunities for community policing initiatives.

① For information on the PSA restructuring plan and the new configuration of PSAs, go to:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/districts/districts.shtml>

① Learn more about career opportunities for sworn officers in the MPDC at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/about/employ/officer.shtml>

UNDER ONGOING ORANGE ALERT, MPDC READIES FOR IMF/WORLD BANK MEETINGS

The International Monetary Fund and World Bank Group are holding their 2004 annual meetings on October 2-3 at the organizations' headquarters in downtown DC. The entire MPDC is mobilizing not only to ensure the safety of this event, but also to maintain a strong presence in DC neighborhoods throughout the weekend. As in past years, groups opposing the policies of IMF and World Bank are expected to hold marches and rallies over the weekend. In addition, the meetings come at a time when DC remains under a heightened (Orange) alert for terrorism, with the IMF and World Bank having been specifically named in August by the Department of Homeland Security as possible targets of terrorists. To help ensure the safety and protect the property of residents, workers and visitors in DC over the weekend, the entire MPDC will be mobilized. Members' days off have been cancelled or adjusted, and leave has been restricted to ensure strong police presence, both outside the IMF/World Bank and in DC's neighborhoods. The scheduling changes will allow the PSAs to be fully staffed throughout the weekend and provide coverage for the IMF/World Bank event as well. To assist the police, Chief Ramsey is asking for the public's cooperation and assistance. While specific details have not been announced, people should be prepared for street closures and traffic delays in some parts of downtown DC, especially in the general vicinity of the IMF and World Bank buildings. And, as always, individuals who see suspicious activity or packages are encouraged to call 9-1-1 right away. More specific, updated information about public safety preparations for the IMF/World Bank event will be posted on the MPDC website.

① To support public safety operations during the event, the MPDC will continue to utilize its network of Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras, which were activated in August following the announcement of the latest Orange alert. Details on the CCTV system are at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/comm/CCTV.shtml>

① To learn more about emergency preparedness in DC, visit:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/family/emergencypreparedness.shtml>

① For more information on the IMF/World Bank meetings, go to:
<http://www.imf.org/external/am/2004/index.htm>

AGGRESSIVE SPEEDING REACHES ANOTHER NEW LOW IN DC

For the third time this year, the rate of aggressive speeding by vehicles monitored by the MPDC's photo radar program has reached a record low. During August 2004, just 4.2 percent of the nearly 919,000 vehicles monitored by photo radar were found to be traveling above the threshold speed established for the program – the lowest rate of aggressive speeding since the automated traffic safety program began more than three years ago. That compares with an aggressive speeding rate of 31 percent in July 2001 (initial warning period) and 25.5 percent in August 2001 (first month of ticketing). Over the three-plus years that photo radar has been in operation, the rate of aggressive speeding in DC has declined from almost 1 in 3 motorists to about 1 in 24. In addition, the average speeds of all vehicles traveling on residential streets, arteries and highways continue to be substantially lower. On streets with a 30-mph speed limit, for example, the average speed of all vehicles detected by photo radar was just over 29 mph in August 2004 - down from nearly 38 mph in July 2001. Thus far, nearly 1.1 million photo radar Notices of Infraction have been mailed and approximately 775,000 paid, resulting in fines of approximately \$58.3 million. This level of consistent enforcement has been achieved without taking officers from other community policing assignments or otherwise diminishing public safety services in DC's neighborhoods.

MPDC TESTIFIES ON AUTO THEFT, PUBLIC CONGESTION BILLS

In testimony this week before the DC Council's Judiciary Committee, the MPDC expressed its general support for two bills that would increase sanctions and establish mandatory minimum penalties for both adult and juvenile offenders who steal and operate stolen vehicles. Special Services Assistant Chief Winston Robinson testified that increased accountability for offenders, as well as for parents of juvenile offenders, is part of the anti-auto theft plan the Mayor Williams announced earlier this year. Robinson said that while the bills would enhance accountability, they do not go far enough in some cases. For example, the MPDC is recommending that there be mandatory intervention (community service and counseling) for first-time juvenile auto thieves and their parents or guardians. For adult offenders, Robinson suggested that the proposed law be strengthened to provide progressively more severe punishments for repeat offenders, rather than treating a 10-time auto thief the same as a two-time offender. A third bill before the Committee would require venue operators to notify the MPDC of events that are likely to cause traffic and other congestion and to reimburse the MPDC for overtime details needed for these events. The MPDC supports the measure in concept, but Robinson suggested language which makes it clear that such events will not diminish neighborhood patrols, but will be staffed by officers working overtime, with the Department reimbursed by the venue operators.

NEWS & NOTES

Homicide of Ward 7 Leader Solved. Last May, 38-year-old Terry Hairston, a former member of the DC School Board, was found murdered inside his home in the 300 block of Burns Street, SE. This past week, MPDC detectives solved the case with the arrest of two Northeast DC women on murder charges. Read the news release at <http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/news.asp?sid=2896>.

Chief on WOL's "Live at Five." Chief Ramsey discusses public safety issues and takes phone calls from 5-6 pm, on Wednesday, September 29, during his monthly appearance on the "Live at Five" program on WOL 1450-AM. Details at <http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/media/media.shtm>.

ATM Safety. With robberies in the DC region over the past week involving Automated Teller Machines, the MPDC reminds residents of some common-sense safety tips to help protect themselves and their money. Details at <http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/consumer/atm.shtm>.

- ① For more information and detailed results of the photo radar program, go to:
http://www.mpdc.dc.gov/info/traffic/speedresults_text.shtm
- ① For information on DC's other traffic safety initiatives, including its red-light camera program, visit:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/traffic/traffic.shtm>
- ① After increasing an alarming 38 percent in 2003 (largely the result of more pedestrian fatalities), the number of traffic fatalities in DC is down by more than 28 percent this year. Get up-to-date traffic fatalities totals at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/traffic/trstats.shtm>
- ① Read the Assistant Chief's complete statement at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/stmts/2004/09/092304.shtm>
- ① While auto theft is down 10 percent this year in DC, it remains a serious problem. Learn how to protect your vehicle at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/traffic/autotheft.shtm>

DATA BOX

Homicides	as of 9/24/04
◆ 2004: 144	
◆ 2003: 183	
◆ % Change: -21.3%	
◆ Closure Rate: 56.9% (82 closures)	
Adult Arrests	week end. 9/18/04
◆ Total: 873	
◆ Drugs: 154	
◆ Weapons: 27	
◆ Motor Vehicle Theft: 19	
◆ Prostitution/Sex Offenses: 34	
Juvenile Activity	
◆ Arrests: 47	week end. 9/18/04
◆ Curfew Violations: 30	week end. 9/21/04
◆ Truants: 138	week end. 9/21/04
Firearm Recoveries	as of 9/22/04
◆ September: 124	
◆ 2004 Total: 1,482	
Traffic Fatalities	as of 9/24/04
◆ 2004: 38	
◆ 2003: 53	
◆ % Change: -28.3%	

Information, ideas, or comments about this service? Send an e-mail to **KEVIN MORISON**, MPDC's Director of Corporate Communications, at kevin.morison@dc.gov. Would you like to have this information e-mailed to you? Just go to our Website and register with **Crimereports.com**.

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